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4 May 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer
for USSR and Eastern Europe
Legislative Counsel

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Congressional Report on Trip to USSR ☐

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1. On the 3rd of May I attended a meeting in the White House with Dr. Brzezinski and nine members of Congress who had recently gone to the Soviet Union. The Congressmen were:

Lucien Nedzi
Willis Gradison
Ronald Dellums
Charles Vanik
John Brademas
Richardson Preyer
Timothy Wirth
Matthew McHugh
Richard Gephardt ☐

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2. The tenor of the comments of this group were:

a. The Soviets received them with very warm hospitality and great candor.

b. The Soviets were very anxious to conclude SALT.

c. The Soviets clearly want SALT because they need the money to improve their economy. It is obvious just looking around the Soviet Union that they have real economic problems with roads, etc. Several stated emphatically that the Soviets they talked to recognized that their economy was a problem. They weren't, on interrogation, fully persuasive in this respect. They complained repeatedly that the U.S. kept changing its position on SALT and it was difficult to conclude the agreement. They were worried that if it took us this long with SALT II, we would go on forever with SALT III while new and threatening developments were proceeding in strategic weaponry technology. They said national technical means

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were adequate on both sides but that it was the United States who had closed off discussion of any on-site inspection.

d. The Soviets were obsessed with the threat from China. They feel the Chinese are barbarians and their leaders immoral, and that there is no reprieve. They really threatened that our playing the China card would be dangerous.

e. 98.4% of all applications for emigration are approved initially and some of the remaining 1.6% eventually.

f. They pooh-poohed civil defense--said there were no drills, it was nothing of significance.

g. The Congressmen felt the Soviets very clearly want to increase trade with us. The Soviets would interpret most favored MFN for China only as a very significant sign of US/Chinese collusion.

h. Sakharov and a number of others were strongly against repeal of the Jackson-Vanik amendment. It wasn't clear whether they were against a waiver with respect to it.

i. It was clear that few people understood the decisionmaking process in the United States and especially the Congress.

j. When asked by one of the Congressmen as to the consequence of Brezhnev's poor health, the Soviets indicated that the policy of detente was irreversible. ☐

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